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## CORRESPONDENTS.

CONTRARY to all precedent, the conductors of this work have, from its commencement, declined to receive communications of any kind from unknown correspondents, being certain that, were the case otherwise, there could not fail to arise, out of so vast a circle of readers, such a multitude of weekly letters, and so great an amount of mediocre and inferior compositions, as would have engrossed our whole time, without any advantage worth speaking of to the work or to the public. We have from the first endeavoured to make the public aware, that the Journal, being a work designed for all who would read, and having in view certain definite results, is necessarily composed by individuals who act in concert, knowing to direct their efforts towards those results; and that, accordingly, nothing can be more unsuitable to it than the occasional productions of young and unskilled writers, who only aim at the glory of seeing themselves in print. It has also been shown that, while we were anxious to discharge every fair and reasonable duty of courtesy, we should have been unfit for any other employment, if we were to read and reply to every letter of remark, inquiry, and discussion, which our readers might be prompted, whether in the spirit of levity, or for serious and respectable objects, to send to us. Notwithstanding these announcements, a great quantity of communications of all kinds have been made to us by unknown persons, so great indeed as to prove in a very striking manner how hopelessly enormous must have been the weekly load which would have reached us, if any thing of the kind had been invited, or even tacitly permitted. Many of these communications have been from evidently estimable persons, containing either compositions of some merit, or remarks deserving attention; but the great majority have been of the kind which we from the first dreaded—verses by children in years or intellect, crude and trite essays, tales of ultra sentimentalism deficient in both character and incident, and letters which it would have only been a waste of time to read, if it were not that, in the very qualities which make them to us undesirable, they served in some measure to illustrate human character.

Chancing one day lately to have our attention directed to a vast pile of this forbidden correspondence—if it can be called correspondence which has never had but one party—it occurred to us that, after all, it might not be amiss to publish a selection of the offered compositions, and to take the desired notice of some of the letters of criticism and inquiry, so as at once to gratify the writers and to make the public acquainted with the state of the case. We propose to do this in the greatest possible good humour, and with the very reverse of a design in the least to offend particular parties. Let each correspondent only keep his own secret, and he is safe.

A great number of letters relate to circumstances of an unimportant nature connected with the work itself. A gentleman from the remotest corner of England or Ireland will think it worth while to let us know that the first sentence of a particular article, lately published, contained, to the best of his judgment, a grammatical error; while one word substituted for another in an immediately following passage from an English poet, seemed to him to deprive the said passage of much of its point. The payment of some fifteen or eighteenpence was not, in the days of dear postage, thought too much for the writer to give, to enable such a letter to reach us. There is indeed no circumstance too minute to be thought worthy of correspondence. One "constant reader" will suggest that the references in the index for our volumes

should be to pages instead of numbers, though the former has been in reality the case since the second volume—a circumstance which a constant reader ought surely to have known. Another will ask in what number a particular article, of which he has a faint recollection, appeared. Some suggest alterations in the size of the sheet. Since Mr Rowland Hill has come into action, this branch of our correspondence has much increased. People will now write from all parts of the United Kingdom to inquire where and how they may get this and that—particulars which they ought to learn from the next bookseller. If a difficulty occurs about keeping a few of the sheets sewed together, the perplexed purchaser immediately devotes a queen's head, as he most irreverently calls it, to the purpose of asking the editors what he is to do, when, in truth, to parody Sterne's remark on Smelfungus, he ought to ask his wife or eldest daughter. Let not our readers at large suppose this to be a hypothetical case. An extract from a late letter, received from a very distant part of the kingdom, will show its reality. The writer, after some remarks of a complimentary nature, comes at length, as he says, "to the point," which point is this. "My neighbours, mostly artisans, and too poor to buy, requested me to let them have a reading of my copy. I felt pleasure in complying with their wishes; but mark the consequences. After a month's numbers had gone the rounds, owing to the way they were stitched, they were returned torn from where the stitch caught, half an inch; and, when again lent, the paper, thus torn, soon lengthened an inch to the right of the original rent. What could I do? I intended to keep them, to have them bound up in years; but, owing to this, I had to give up my intention, and now they remain almost useless. [Our correspondent then describes an effort he made to sew them up as books are bound, which he had ultimately to give up in despair—so that] I had to relinquish the buying of them, much to my regret. Many have complained to me that they were in a like situation. I am certain, if you could contrive some way to avoid this, many persons would take them that do not. When they get into this state, they are tossed about as almost useless; and the money is then considered to have been almost thrown away." We must own that, without this acknowledgment, we could not have believed that any reader would have given up a work which he professed to like, and the price of which is a mere trifle, because a great quantity of reading and thumbing wore it considerably. To think of the small price of this sheet being considered as thrown away, because, after some twenty people have read it, it has become a little ragged and unfit for binding—as if all this vast amount of reading (as much as one person reading a book of twenty large sheets) were nothing! Surely we have here a remarkable illustration of the insatiableness of the human heart. Something of the same kind may have been remarked in many quarters with regard to the cheap postage. People are relieved all at once from the long-felt burden of paying sevenpence at an average for every letter they receive, and, instantly after, instead of any joyful feeling there-  
ment, we hear only mutterings at trifling inconveniences, and ridicule at the peculiar appearance of the stamps and envelopes.

The inquiries for information and advice are so numerous and so various, that the most encyclopedic and most sage of minds would fail to answer them all satisfactorily. "A subscriber from the commencement" writes from the neighbourhood of London—"I shall feel obliged if you will inform me what is a good thing for the voice, for I am in the habit of singing, and

after I have done so but for a short time, I become quite hoarse. I cannot take eggs," &c. A gentleman states that he is emboldened by our philanthropy to ask "what is the best and most expeditious mode of drying the inside of, and making fit for habitation, a newly built house." He is in great haste, too, for an answer, for he enters the premises at Ladyday, and his wife is somewhat poorly. Here are two things we never once thought of in our lives, yet about which we are expected to be as conversant as if we were opera-singers on the one hand, or builders on the other. We were some years ago requested to state by what steps a person might attain the situation of a serjeant of police, and more recently to describe the state of the law respecting the hiring of servants in Ireland. The respectable individuals who made these inquiries must allow us to express our surprise at being supposed to have such information at our fingers' ends. We can only account for such applications, upon the supposition that the great number of facts of one kind and another stated in every Journal, has at length led to a general belief that there is nothing beyond our ken. This would certainly be a very flattering supposition, but, we fear, it would not be much more sound than the notions which the people of most states are said to entertain respecting the wisdom of their rulers. It has been said that the world is in reality ruled by a very little wisdom; and so we suspect the Journal is conducted by virtue of a remarkably small stock of knowledge. We must not forget that our friends "the boys" sometimes make bold to approach the editorial throne. We had some years ago a most formidable communication from the secretary of a juvenile bathing club, calling our attention to the expediency of forming swimming or bathing clubs all over the kingdom, and holding occasional competitions at certain stations, in the manner of the Yacht Club regattas. We had also the honour to be addressed by "a young though constant reader," for the purpose of ascertaining if a round substance of a bluish colour, which people sometimes meet in the sea when swimming, has the power, as is usually said, of making those whom it touches feel as if they had been burnt.

In all of these cases, the subject of inquiry is comparatively trifling. In many others, it is no unfair calculation that to fully ascertain the point inquired about, would occupy us a week, and require, besides, some travelling. For example, we have been asked to state where the title-deeds of a piece of property in Lancashire, forfeited in the affair of 1745, might be found. In some instances, advice is asked about the most delicate domestic affairs. Persons residing in distant provinces will explain to us their whole circumstances, and ask how we should advise them to proceed—our advice, if we give it, being understood to actuate them towards decisions involving the whole future weal or woe of a family. A young person of fortune, whose home was in a remote part of the United Kingdom, and who lived disagreeably with his relations, once actually came to Edinburgh, to seek counsel from two humble individuals who have their own troubles to contend with, and are only conscious of forming a channel through which the maxims of general and traditional wisdom may be communicated a little more largely than heretofore to society. Individuals who think of settling temporarily on the Continent for the sake of economy or the education of their children, will write to us from the most distant parts of England, minutely describing the state of their family and pecuniary circumstances, and requesting us to point out the places most suited to their purpose. In more than one such letter, the writer discusses the attractions of various places, in a manner

which shows, what he would perhaps scarcely believe, that he knows ten times more of the matter than we do, having probably done that which we never did, namely, turned his attention to the subject, and been for some time in the habit of conversing on it with all who really had any information to give. We are often, as might more reasonably be expected, asked to point out the most eligible colonies, with a view to emigration. Here also we have sometimes very minute specifications of circumstances, joined to a request that we should take all these into consideration, and advise accordingly. The request is certainly an honour, and we trust it can never be supposed that we do not sympathise heartily and earnestly in the anxieties of these parties, albeit we never saw, and probably never shall see them. We are also sensible of there being a great and deplorable cause for such applications, in the faithlessness of many of the books on the colonies. Unable to depend on what they find in print, the intending emigrants eagerly seek for the testimony of some tangible person; and to us they come, as almost the only individuals with whom they think they can have any confidential communication. It is generally with sad hearts that we receive and read these letters, for we are at once anxious to do friendly service, and yet sensible that in such cases we cannot and ought not to interfere. In some instances, even while we sympathise with the writer, the letter will irresistibly raise a smile, from the very simplicity which it evinces. Amongst a bundle of epistles of this kind, we find one of pretty old date, which we should be glad if we could present in full to our readers, without any risk of giving pain to the writer, towards whom we feel nothing but good will. It is from a middle-aged married man, exercising the profession of a teacher in one of the southern counties of England. He commences, as almost all such correspondents do, with a panegyric upon our humble labours, and a hope that his addressing us will not be deemed intrusive. He then proceeds, in about three long and closely filled pages, to give a history of his life, and an account of his existing circumstances, which he was somewhat dissatisfied with. He wishes to change, either to some other school, or to some other kind of business. Having hitherto made little or nothing, "I should," says he, "give a decided preference to such occupation as would afford the safest and surest mode of realising a competence." After another long and closely filled page respecting qualifications, he re-commences under a new date. He has in the mean time turned his thoughts to emigration. He then details a totally different set of qualifications, having a regard to the condition and prospects of a settler in one of the colonies. He recollects that he has always had a liking for gardening. He "can handle a spade, and is not averse to manual labour." He wishes to know what part of the globe would be most suitable. He looks ultimately to the purchase of land. He would wish to fix himself where the soil is most valuable for agricultural purposes, and where the climate is most salubrious, and not differing very much in temperature from the one to which he has been accustomed. These points being settled, he would wish to secure the best advice as to all the minutiae of procedure, whether to apply to any of the emigration companies, what articles to take with him, the most prudent precautions to be taken by one possessing a small capital, and so forth. Might he not unite his former to his new profession in his new country? He then enters into a long exposition of what he thinks he could do in a literary capacity in a remote settlement. Finally, after six dense pages, he expresses his fear that he may not have made his case yet plain enough for our forming a judgment upon it, but entreats that nevertheless we shall speak to it as well as we can. To have been able to say ten decided words in answer to this gentleman's inquiries, we should have required to visit him, and spend at least a month in the study of his character and circumstances, and, after all, it would have been the most painful responsibility we could have incurred if we had taken it upon us to advise him in what part of the world to bestow himself!

Letters from men who have entered learned professions, and are not prospering in them, are not uncommon. While perhaps holding a high head in some provincial or metropolitan situation, they pour into the ears of a pair of distant strangers the bitterest complaints of the ambition or misjudgment of parents, which has condemned them to a position in which they are virtually idle, and have no hope of ever realising a subsistence. We hear of the *lax delay* in a different sense from that generally thought of. These individuals seek our aid and counsel, with a view to changes which could not be breathed of in their own neighbourhood without injury to their present prospects, such as these are. The woes attending the more ambitious walks of life are thus brought before our eyes in a way quite peculiar, and which conveys the most painful impression of such courses in a country like this, where all the beaten paths are overcrowded. Another class of applicants are youths just about to enter the world, whose minds have been stimulated by the cultivation now so common, but who feel trammelled and bound down by harsh, degrading, and unworthy circumstances, which they know not how either to submit to or to overcome. Placed perhaps in obscure and remote situations, they have scarcely one congenial spirit near, to whom they can communicate their feelings, or from whom they can seek advice. But this little sheet weekly comes

before them, with words which they honour by calling wise, and sentiments which they deem generous and philanthropic; and finding it to be, as it were, their only friend, they turn to its editors for a helping hand in their darksome struggle. Many affecting tales thus reach us, of the force of which we, certainly, may well be sensible; but how is a stranger to interfere in matters so delicate, and so full of responsibility? Principles we may expound, and a general spirit of benevolence we may seek to encourage and extend; but we, of course, neither can nor ought to take it upon us to direct the fate of individuals. Let one remark of experience here attend the sympathy which we would express for this class of our correspondents. It is alone the energetic native to each man, and not any external aid or advice, which can steadily or certainly enable him to become the master instead of the slave of circumstances.

#### POPULAR INFORMATION ON POLITICAL ECONOMY.

##### FIFTH ARTICLE.—CAUSES OF DIFFERENCES IN THE AMOUNT OF WAGES.

ON a former occasion, namely, in No. 377, we considered this important subject at some length, chiefly with reference to capital, as the general fund out of which the whole amount of wages must come. We propose on the present occasion to turn our attention to the circumstances which rule the distribution of the fund, and regulate the proportional amount of wages. Wages is the word used for expressing the return which a man obtains for his labour, whether it be employed in the production of a commodity in demand in the market, or assume any other form in which it will be remunerated—such as menial service. When a cooper makes a cask, and charges a certain sum for it, the whole of that sum is not wages: part of it is the repayment of what he has expended for wood and in the use of tools, with the usual profits; the remainder only is wages. The price, however, of a basket made of osiers plucked on the wayside, without expense to the maker, is wages. The chief distinctions which have been taken on the subject of wages, are on the question of extent. Simple, however, as may at first sight appear the distinction into high and low wages, it is one of the elements of which political economists have been completely baffled in the attempt to lay down, and it is pretty clear that any rules on the subject can only be of an approximating character. Some have employed the simple element of money, calling wages high when much is given, and low when little is given. However clearly this criterion may distinguish the extent of two sets of wages both paid at the same time, or within an immaterial period of each other, it will be difficult to make it a means of comparing the relative state of the working classes at two distinct periods; for the precious metals themselves, though not subject to the same sudden fluctuations as other commodities, may become changed in value to a material extent, after the lapse of a long interval. Thus, "The differences," says Mr Senior, "which have taken place in the amount of money wages at different times, inform us of scarcely any thing but the abundance or scarcity of the precious metals at those times." Nor is mere money a proper criterion in comparing wages in one place with those in another at one point of time, for there are many adventitious circumstances which will make the same sum "go much farther," as it is called, in one locality than another, even though both be within the same kingdom. Three shillings a day in Dublin will make a man as well off in every point of view as four shillings will make him in London.

Another criterion attempted has been, the proportion which the labourer receives of the produce of his labour, as compared with the quantity that goes to the capitalist. Perhaps, by taking the whole amount of the produce of labour in any one country, and finding what proportion of it is divided among the whole labouring population, an estimate might be made of their position, or, in other words, of the amount of wages. This would be an unfair criterion, however, in individual instances, for the circumstances which elevate or reduce the labourer's wages sometimes affect the returns of the capitalist to a still greater extent. When wages are at a miserably low ebb, the manufacturer's profits are sometimes proportionally lower; sometimes they are extinct altogether; and he keeps up his trade merely because he has embarked capital in it, which, if he stopped, would be entirely, instead of only being partially, lost. In these circumstances, the labourer, though he may receive the whole of the returns procured for the produce of his labour, may be very poorly paid.

Of the economists who have adopted some one article as a measure of wages, those who have taken grain have certainly been nearer the truth than those who have taken money. Wages, they say, are high when the labourer gets much food, or what will buy much, and low when he gets little. It is obvious that, if not the whole, by far the greater part of the wages of labour will be included under this measurement. If one hundred shillings in one year will pro-

cure but one quarter of corn, and in another year will procure two, the labourer having on both occasions the same money wages, is, in the latter, not quite twice as rich as in the former (for rent, clothing, &c., have to be taken into consideration), but he is at all events much richer. This, however, is a measure which, the greater the wages are, and the higher the labourer rises in social condition, loses its accuracy. To be a perfect measure, indeed, it would presume food to be the only commodity on which wages are spent: and to make it approximate accuracy, it must presume only a small portion expended on other things. Thus, to the pavier, who is perhaps earning 15d. per day, the price of grain is of the utmost consequence in cloathing or depressing his wages. To the physician or barrister, who may be making several guineas a day, and who, perhaps, uses no more grain than the pavier, the price of food, as it directly affects him, is not an object of a moment's consideration; and so in the grades between these two extremes. The higher, indeed, the wages are, and the greater therefore the quantity of artificial wants, the less accurately does the quantity of food they will procure measure their amount.

Another method which has been suggested for measuring the extent of wages, is by the amount of commodities of all kinds which they will procure for the labourer. In using this test, however, for the purposes of ascertaining the respective position of the working classes at different periods, we must compare their comforts and luxuries with those possessed by other members of society. The same amount of these commodities at two different epochs of history, mark very different relative ranks. It is often remarked, that a well employed labourer of the present day possesses more comforts and luxuries than ever fell to the lot of one of our Saxon kings: yet, if it be the case that other classes of society have had their comforts and luxuries increased in a still greater ratio, it cannot be said that the relative position of the labourer is elevated. During the last half century, a wonderful diminution has taken place in the price of manufactured goods—a diminution by which the labourer's position has been materially improved. Yet, unless it has been improved by this means to the same extent to which that of the other classes of the community have been benefited, it cannot be said to have been elevated—in other words, wages cannot be called higher. Fifty years ago it may have taken ten days' wages to procure for the labourer's wife the printed calico gown which may now be had for one day's labour; yet were wages reduced by even one-third of what they were fifty years ago, there is no doubt that they would be virtually lowered. Thus difficult is it to find any means by which the amount of wages can be accurately measured: but there is no doubt that all the methods proposed have their respective uses, in providing us with the means of at least approaching the solution of that very important problem—perhaps the most important in the science of political economy—whether the labouring portion of the community is well or ill remunerated.

In a commercial and manufacturing country, such as ours, where almost all the labour is sold, and there are very few who apply the produce of their exertions entirely to their own domestic uses, the means by which labour is set agoing is capital—a subject which has been considered in another chapter. The extent to which this impulse is in existence, will materially affect the extent to which labour can be made use of. If we presume that it is unlimited—that is to say, that wherever there is an opening for its application, it is forthcoming, then the relative amount which the different kinds of labourers will receive in wages, will depend on two circumstances—the extent to which the species of labour they are able and willing to execute is in demand, and the number of individuals who are prepared to supply that demand. When the demand is great, and the number prepared to supply it small, wages are high; and when these circumstances are reversed, they are low. It is a common fallacy to overlook these regulating circumstances, and to consider the amount of wages as regulated by the price of the necessities of life—to say that wages will be high when food is dear, and that they will be low when food is cheap. Wages can only be regulated by the price of the necessities of life in one particular case, which is, fortunately, of very rare and limited occurrence; it is that where the labourer, instead of disposing of his labour as a trader, is merely kept in existence by his employer like a domestic animal, for the sake of the work that may be obtained from him. Matters can only be in this state when labourers are so numerous in comparison with the demand for labour, that, from their underbidding each other, the employer could hire them at less than what would support life, were it not that then they could not labour. In this case, and this alone, the wages given will depend on the price of necessities, for of these the labourer must have a certain quantity, otherwise the employer loses his labour. When provisions are lowered in price, the employer can lower his wages, because the competition being for bare subsistence, he knows that if those who have hitherto worked for him decline to do so, others will be glad to take their place. In the case, however, where wages, depending on the number of individuals capable of meeting the demand, are beyond what is barely enough for subsistence, both parties are in a state of competition; and if the labourers be underbidding each other, the employers



are overbidding. It were an idle use of words to tell an artificer, whose labour is in demand, that he must work for less, because bread is cheap. If wages, indeed, were thus measured by the means of subsistence, there are circumstances necessary for the continuance of the species, which would of themselves make marked distinctions in the rate of wages. They would have to be increased or decreased, according to the largeness or smallness of a family; whereas, in practice, the question whether a labourer is a bachelor in lodgings, or the parent of twelve children, is one which the employer has no occasion to ask.

As there are great varieties in the amount of wages for different kinds of labour, so are there of the intensity of the labour given in return. The smaller the number who are capable of performing the sort of labour wanted, in comparison with the demand, the greater, as has been before remarked, is the amount of wages given. Incidental circumstances apart, then, the reason why the number is smaller will be because the labour is more difficult. Adventitious circumstances, the most material of which is education, will have, in many cases, the effect of giving the few their superiority over the many; but in more instances than are generally imagined, native energy and intenseness of exertion accomplish the distinction. The unskilled labourer, working on small wages, looks frequently to the wealth of the busy member of a higher profession, as one incidentally favoured through unequal fortune, without reflecting that the labour by which it is bought is fully as much greater than his own, as the lot of the possessor is more felicitous. The qualities by which great things are accomplished, are firm endurance, the exertion of much thought and calculation, and the resignation of immediate gratifications for future advantages. These qualities are comparatively rare, and it is because they are so that they generally bring in the end great worldly advantages to those who exercise them. The labourer, who sluggishly gives forth his daily amount of physical strength to satisfy the cravings of nature, is apt to view the results with envy, and but seldom reflects that the reason why he himself does not attain them is, because he is either unable or unwilling to support the continuous and calculated exertion and the sacrifice of ease by which they are purchased.

The amount of wages that can be procured by a man in any particular line, constitutes almost the only means we possess of estimating the extent of the labour he incurs, because the greater the extent of the labour (in other words, the difficulty of performing the work required) the fewer are the persons who will be capable and willing to undertake it, and these fewer, before they consent to relinquish the comparative ease enjoyed by the followers of less difficult pursuits, must be bribed by a higher rate of remuneration. Incidental circumstances, however, tend so far to disturb this measure, that in particular cases it is frequently not to be trusted to. Ambition will prompt many a man to undertake very intense labour for a small remuneration—hence, where the labour is equal, the less honourable the trade the better it is paid, unless it be so far degrading that none but vicious characters will engage in it. We can often then pronounce one trade to be more laborious than another, independently of the wages in each; if it so happened, for instance, that a skilful watch-maker received no more than a hand-loom weaver, we should undoubtedly say either that the former was under, or the latter overpaid, owing to the operation of some circumstance tending to disturb the course of the labour market. It so happens that an incidental circumstance at the present moment depresses the wages of the hand-loom weaver, to an extent which has created a vast amount of misery. The circumstance in question is the introduction of the power-loom. The effect of this has doubtless been very great; but in looking to the misery of that unfortunate class, too much perhaps has been attributed to the introduction of machinery. Hand-loom weaving happens to be a very easy trade—perhaps the easiest in which any considerable number of men has in later times been employed—and the indolent and unenterprising are loath to abandon it. During the rapid progress of the cotton manufacture, there was a demand for this description of work, which raised the remuneration for it above its natural scale, when compared with other kinds of labour; and a class of men were thus brought into existence, who, accustomed to gain their bread by a small amount of exertion, were peculiarly unfitted to be turned adrift to choose a new profession. Circumstances thus tended in the first instance to elevate this pursuit above, and afterwards to depress it below, its natural level. Still greater revulsions have occasionally taken place on a smaller scale. On some occasions, during the progress of the war, gun-lock makers have been known to be paid a guinea a day. Such high remuneration prompted many to follow the trade, who, on the return of peace, found that it sunk below the average of other handicraft occupations.

The proper price of labour may be disturbed by a monopoly, whether occasioned by the operation of law, or by voluntary combination. In the former case, the responsibility generally lies, not with the individual labourer, but with the legislator; in the latter, it is solely at the door of the labourer, who thus sacrifices others to the desire of obtaining money without working for it. Presuming a certain sum of money to be the amount which the community is able and disposed to expend on some branch of labour, a

combination among the individuals who practise it may assume either of two forms. They may limit their number, and thus compel the sum to be spent in such a manner that each of them shall obtain more wages, and that the amount of labour executed shall be less than would have been the case had there been free competition; or, secondly, if their numbers amount to or exceed that which free competition would produce, they may insist on working only to a limited extent, and thus obtaining more wages for their work than they would have procured in a free market. In either case, the wrong done is this, that the labourer obtains money for work which he has not done. In the one case, he is paid as if he had performed a more difficult kind of labour than he has done; in the other, he is paid for little labour as if he had given much. The question is—who are injured? It is not the capitalist, for what he has to look to is merely the profit of so much outlay; and if the public have a certain sum to give him for what he produces, it is of no consequence to him whether it be given for much or for little of the commodity. By bringing the capitalists of other nations to compete with him, to be sure it may affect him; but this is a separate question, in which, as shown in another paper, the workman is more concerned than his master. The person, then, on whom the overcharge of the labourer falls, is the consumer; and it is of importance that we should know on which class of consumers it falls most heavily. The answer is easily given—it is on the poorest class. The poor spend nearly their whole income on the produce of labour; the rich only spend part of theirs; and if they procured but half the quantity of commodities they do, they would not be great losers, while the poor are materially benefited or injured by a slight increase or decrease. Horses, dogs, works of art, and an array of servants—articles in which the wages of ordinary labour are but a partial ingredient—form the principal subjects of the rich man's expenditure. As to his bread and linen, it would not materially affect him if they cost double what they do; while an increase of five per cent. on these articles would be materially felt by the poor man. Before the late improvements in the cotton manufacture, calicoes were a coveted and admired dress among the higher classes, because they cost six times their present price. If we could imagine combination existing to such an extent as to restore them to their old cost, the rich would resume them with the same pride as before; but how great would be the loss to the family of the poor man! Let it not be lost sight of, that every combination to raise wages, creates a distinct and palpable loss, nearly the whole of which falls on the working classes.

#### AILEEN A-ROON,\*

A LEGEND OF IRELAND.

THERE was preparation for a great festival in the halls of Kavanagh. On the morrow, the young heiress of that ancient house, a princely one in the elder days of Ireland's history, and still distinguished and wealthy, was to be wedded to a neighbouring chieftain and relative, her equal in rank and fortune. Great was the joy of the father and kin of the maiden on this occasion. But what were the feelings of the principal party concerned? On the evening preceding the day appointed for her nuptials, Aileen Kavanagh sat in her chamber, weeping bitterly. She had given her consent to the ceremony which was to take place, but that consent had been wrung from her by ways and means of which she was now suspicious. She had been told that the youth to whom she had long since given up the whole treasure of her affections, was false to her, and had wedded another. Carol O'Daly, brother of Donogh More, the chief of one of the most ancient families of Connaught, had been the lover of Aileen. He was one who had no equal among the youths of Connaught, as regarded either personal qualities or mental accomplishments, to which latter possession, indeed, comparatively few even of the noble and wealthy could lay any strong claim, in the days to which our story refers. Carol O'Daly had never met his superior in feats of arms, yet his own tastes were peaceful, and he cultivated all the elegant arts of the time with such assiduity, that, had experience not taught them to speak prudently when they mentioned the name of Carol, the rude chieftains of Connaught would have called his likings feminine and unbecoming. As it was, O'Daly became renowned for his skill on the harp, and no professional minstrel of the country would have dared to compete with him. When Aileen Kavanagh was just blooming into womanhood, Carol was a friend of her father, and a visitor at his castle. It may be imagined how brightly he shone in her eyes, when contrasted with the less polished chieftains around. She was herself passionately fond of music, and he taught her so to touch the harp, that she became, to use his own words, "the only rival of whom he was afraid." The pair loved each other, and at this moment every thing smiled on their love. But the Kavanaghs quarrelled with Donogh More O'Daly, and though no actual contests followed between them, an enduring coldness took place of their past friendship. Carol was frowned

away from the castle of Kavanagh, though he left it not till he had won a pledge of faith from Aileen, and had in turn vowed to her enduring constancy.

To clear his brother from unjust charges which had caused the English viceroy to outlaw the whole name and clan, and to while away the interval till better days might come, Carol O'Daly left his native district to visit the court of the viceroy. It was at this time that the father of Aileen pressed her to give her hand to a relative, whom he wished to make the supporter of his house and family. The maiden confessed, and pled in excuse, her affection for Carol O'Daly, and her engagement with him. After a short interval, finding her inclinations not to be otherwise overcome, her father informed her that her lover was false, and produced witnesses, who so far gained on the credulity of Aileen, as to cause her hastily to assent to the union proposed by her father. But all her lover's truth and nobleness of nature rushed afterwards upon her recollection, and she became miserable at the thought of what she had done. As the time fixed for the nuptials approached, that misery increased to excess. On the day, however, which preceded the fatal one, an event occurred which admitted a ray of hope into her mind. An old attendant, who had been the confidant of her former engagement, brought her a letter from Carol O'Daly. He had heard of her intended nuptials, and of the calumnies invented against him; and he besought her to grant him an interview, and allow him to clear himself in her eyes before it was too late. The night preceding the nuptial morn was the earliest on which he could arrive, and even then it would be only by the utmost speed of his good horse that he could accomplish the journey.

Hour after hour passed away on that night, and Aileen, who had entreated to be left alone, sat in her chamber weeping, for Carol did not arrive. Her old attendant, who filed to her the place of a mother, and who was the only person beside her, in vain strove to cheer her sinking heart. The night was a dark and stormy one of winter, but in spite of its inclemency, Aileen was ever and anon at the window looking out. From this vain task, she turned always to her harp, a memorial of her lover, which was at the present moment unusually dear to her. Midnight came and went by. The heart of the maiden grew heavier and heavier, and her lamenting found voice in song.

#### AILEEN'S SONG.

The night is dark, the wind is high,  
And fiercely drives the sleety;  
It seems as all had vowed that I  
And Carol should not meet.  
Yet well I know his dauntless heart,  
And well I know his faith;  
But one thing will his purpose thwart—  
And that one thing is Death.  
They said that he was false to me,  
That he had bow'd to gold,  
And, where his heart could never be,  
His hand had basely sold:  
I did a while believe their guile,  
But soon I felt and knew,  
That Carol's love as heaven above,  
As truth itself was true.  
More wild and loud the storm has grown,  
And darker is the night;  
Unmindful of a maiden's moan,  
The moon withholds her light.  
Oh! what if Carol lose the way,  
Or perish in the flood!  
The thought forbids my heart to play,  
And curdles all my blood!  
Look out, ye pitying stars above,  
Look out, thou gentle moon!  
Give light and guidance to my love,  
And bring him to me soon.  
Of all my earthly hopes and fears  
This night it bears the sum:  
But wherefore blind myself with tears?  
Oh, surely he will come!

The hours of night ran on, and still no signal of the lover's arrival was heard under the window of the unhappy Aileen. Again and again did she send her aged nurse to the private postern by which they expected to receive Carol, and of which the attendant had taken care to secure the key. But the wished-for visitor was not to be seen. Anxiety about her own fate was now mingled, in the mind of Aileen, with fears for the safety of her lover on a night so dark and stormy. She prayed for the appearance of the moon, with a fervour only to be conceived in such a case as hers. At length, she was conscious of a light breaking slowly into her apartment. She started up, and rushed to the casement, only to sink back in deeper distress than ever, for it was the light of dawn.

But for the prayers and entreaties of her attendant, the despairing Aileen would have left the castle, and sought, in the tender mercies of the storm, that refuge and relief which seemed denied to her from all other sources. The anxious and attached nurse, however, poured out assurances that Carol would never desert her, but would yet find means to save her from the fate she dreaded; and the heart of the maiden derived some little encouragement from these assertions. The day was spent by Aileen in mingled agonies of fear and hope. She kept her chamber under plea of preparation for the ceremony, but all the preparation requisite was made, not by her, but by her attendants. The evening came, with a speed which seemed to her unnaturally great; and the castle was filled with the kin of the Kavanaghs, prepared to hold joyous festival. Aileen, though sick to death at heart, was compelled to grace with her presence the reception of the visitors, to whom, notwithstanding the languor of her move-

\* Aileen a-Roon, "Aileen (or Eileen) the secret treasure of my heart."

ments, she seemed the fairest of human beings. Happily, the youth to whom she was immediately to be wedded was not of ungente nature, and seconded her wish, which she was at length compelled to express, for leave to compose herself by a short retirement. She had passed to a corner of the hall for this purpose, when, rising gently amid the other music, the sounds of a single harp arrested her ear. The air it played was new to her, but of surpassing sweetness, and thrilled her very heart. She looked to the spot where the harper sat, and saw a figure, with snowy hair, and bent seemingly with the load of many years. She drew nigh, as if attracted involuntarily, to the secluded place which the harper occupied, and heard him pour forth the following words, in unison with his music, and in tones so low that the crowd heeded them not. But the ears of Aileen caught the sounds as fully as if they had been uttered by a thousand voices.

#### THE HARPER'S SONG.

Here is thy home to be,  
Aileen a-Roon?  
Or wilt thou go with me,  
Aileen a-Roon?  
Far on the mountain side,  
Wilt thou become my bride?  
Or wilt thou here abide,  
Aileen a-Roon?  
Think of the happy hours,  
Aileen a-Roon,  
Wait us among the flowers,  
Aileen a-Roon:  
None whom you here may see,  
Ever can love like me—  
None else would die for thee,  
Aileen a-Roon!  
Think of my breaking heart,  
Aileen a-Roon!  
Oh are we thus to part,  
Aileen a-Roon?  
Here then amid my foes,  
Come I my life to close—  
Welcome the grave's repose,  
Aileen a-Roon!  
Blow never fell on me,  
Aileen a-Roon,  
But was repaid with three,  
Aileen a-Roon:  
Yet on thy kin my arm  
Ne'er shall alight in harm—  
Fatal but strong thy charm,  
Aileen a-Roon!  
Oh think how fond our love,  
Aileen a-Roon!  
All other loves above,  
Aileen a-Roon!  
Ne'er did the tribes of air  
Number a truer pair—  
Oh must I now despair,  
Aileen a-Roon!

The agitated maiden knew that Carol was before her, and hope and terror contended so strongly in her breast, that she would have fallen to the ground, had not her nurse, who, having introduced the harper, had been watching the scene, passed quickly to her side and supported her. Aileen took advantage of the permission to retire formerly given her by her father, and moved with her attendant from the apartment, only whispering tremulously in passing her lover, "Thine—thine only!" By this time, however, her stay had been noticed, and some of the visitors were attracted towards the strange harper. Carol broke out into a verse which seemed as a common harper's welcome to a bride, but which bore a different meaning to the ears of the retiring maiden herself—

Cead mille faite,  
Aileen a-Roon,  
Cead mille faite,  
Aileen a-Roon.

When the harper had thus sung a "hundred thousand welcomes to Aileen, the treasure of his heart," he was silent, and the attention of the company was soon diverted from him. Seeing this, he rose slowly, and, with the step of apparent age, left the hall. In a few instants, knowing the castle well, he had made his way to the apartments of Aileen, and had folded her in his arms. "Aileen, beloved!" he cried; "I am come!" "Oh save me—save me!" was her reply. "I will; I can!" he returned. "Horses wait us but a short way hence; and there, too, is Donogh More, and my brave brothers, with many a good arm besides, to guard and rescue thee! They would have stormed the castle, Aileen, before the betrothed of Carol O'Daly should have been lost; but I would not shed blood akin to thine! Come, thou shalt be saved without blood! Come, my beloved!"

In those rude feudal days, when matches were seldom made upon the fair principle of mutual liking, an escape such as that proposed to Aileen by her lover was not so apt to shock the better feelings of a well-disposed maiden as it might now be. Aileen fled with Carol O'Daly, and fled safely. The Kavanaghs soon discovered their loss, and, suspecting the truth, pursued the fugitives, but in vain. A deadly feud was like to have followed, but Donogh More O'Daly, who was restored to peace with the ruling powers chiefly through the impression made by his brother at the viceroy's court, gratefully defended the fugitives, in such a way as to show the father of Aileen the prudence of coming to terms. A joyous event this was to the bride of Carol O'Daly, and not unimportant to the welfare long afterwards of their children and children's children.

The air which Carol O'Daly played in the castle of Kavanagh, and which had sprung up in his mind

while musing sadly upon Aileen and journeying to her rescue, is known in Ireland by the name of Aileen a-Roon; and the words which he sung are also extant, though we shall not say that those given here contain anything more than a partial glimpse of some of the ideas expressed in the original. The incidents now related are familiar to this hour to the common people in Ireland, and the expression "Cead mille faite," first used by Carol O'Daly, has become a byword among them. Scotland has sometimes put in a claim for Carol O'Daly's beautiful composition, which also bears the name of Robin Adair, but there can be no doubt entertained that its origin is Irish. Handel is said to have declared that he would rather be the author of Aileen a-Roon than of all the great works he had executed.

#### OCCASIONAL NOTES.

##### INTERESTING ANECDOTE OF EMANCIPATED NEGROES.

A FRIEND, residing in Scotland, has communicated to us the following most interesting anecdote, of the truth of which our readers may rest fully assured:—

"Alexander Finlay, a native of Edinburgh, was, at an early period of life, sent out to Jamaica, and took his post as a book-keeper on a plantation, where he rose to be an overseer, and is now an attorney, having the charge of several estates. If I may judge from the good feeling and good sense which appear in his conversation, he must have been a favourite with the negroes, and acquired a thorough knowledge of their character and habits.

The average produce of one estate, put under his charge (I believe, though I am not quite sure, the very estate on which he had been educated), was, during the last twenty years of slavery, sixty-seven hogheads of sugar, and the expense of management some hundreds of pounds per annum. As soon as the term of apprenticeship commenced, he, then the attorney for owners at home on whose confidence he could rely, paid off all the European officers, and gave the charge of the negroes and the labour to negroes whom he thought qualified for the duty, not by their education, for they could neither read nor write,\* but by their character and habits. The produce rose to ninety-seven hogheads, and is now one hundred and five, and the expenses of management do not exceed £50 per annum, chiefly gratuities to the black men, who do the duty of book-keepers and overseers.

This is the account given to me by Mr Finlay. He is a plain man, without any affectation. I have confidence in all he says; and it is confirmed by the overflowing gratitude of his owners, ladies, who are surprised to find themselves so rich.

The greatest of his difficulties, when he set about the work, was the violence of opinion against him amongst the white people."

##### THE POLITICAL PREPOSESSIONS OF ROBERT BURNS.

The general impression respecting the political feelings of Burns, is that they were of the liberal stamp. They certainly were so, and to an ultra extent, in his latter days; but this is far from being true of the earlier period of his life. In the year 1825, two gentlemen having had a dispute and a bet on this subject, one of them wrote to Sir Walter Scott, to request that he would, if possible, decide the question for them, when the author of Waverley replied in the following terms:—"There is not the smallest question that Burns, when he first came to Edinburgh, was a keen Pittite, and a Jacobite to boot. The latter feeling, he somewhere says, was a matter of sentiment rather than reason, but he was quite serious in his approbation of Pitt's administration. The whole ballad beginning

"When Guildford good our pilot stood,"

is an eulogy on the prime minister, and a very warm one, and he is mentioned as a subject of panegyric in his Ode to the King on the Birth day. After Burns went to Dumfriesshire, and the French Revolution broke out, he adopted other views in politics of a more popular nature, and of course the minister sunk in his estimation; but down to that period he was an admirer of Mr Pitt. (Signed) WALTER SCOTT.

Edinburgh, 21st February, 1825."

Sir Walter, also, in a note communicated to Mr Lockhart, and printed in his Life by that gentleman, alludes to some "passing stupid verses in the papers, attacking and defending his [Burns's] satire on a certain preacher, whom he termed 'an unco calf.' In one of them," adds Sir Walter, "occurred these lines in vituperation of the adversary—

"A whig, I guess. But Rab's a tory,  
And gies us mony a funny story."

This was in 1787."

These diets of Sir Walter Scott appear quite true. The Jacobite feeling was certainly the predominant one in the poet's earlier years, and down to about 1790; but such other political bias as he acknowledged at that time, appears to have been in favour of the ministry of Mr Pitt. He seems to have been prepossessed in favour of this statesman from the first, in consequence of his admiration of the gigantic genius of Chatham. "Will's a true gude fellow's gett

\* They kept accounts by tallies, or, as we used to call them, nick-sticks.

† The original of this letter is in the possession of Henry Dalrymple, Esq. of Stirling, in the county of Dublin.

[child]," he says, in his Dream for the king's birthday. Again, in his Earnest Cry and Prayer respecting the troubles of the distillers, he says, "Tell yon gude blude o' auld Boconnock's," meaning Mr Pitt, whose illustrious sire was second son to Robert Pitt of Boconnock, in the county of Cornwall. In another place the poet says, quite seriously, "A garter gie to Willie Pitt." The three last verses of the ballad on the American war form the most decisive proof of the poet's predilection for the "heaven-born minister." They are a stormy burst of triumph on his overcoming the Coalition.

"The Saxon lads, wi' loud placads,  
On Chatham's boy did ca' a man;  
And Scotland drew her pipe, and blew,  
'Up, Willie, waur them a', man,' &c."

At the same time, it must be kept in view that the regard which the poet entertained for the minister was but in small measure extended to the existing occupant of the throne.

At the general election of 1790, the contest between Sir James Johnstone of Westerhall and Captain Miller, for the Dumfriessburgh, was celebrated by Burns in three ballads, in which he evidently leans to the former candidate, who was the tory. In one of these, he makes a bitter allusion to the conduct of the whig party on the regency question. After this period, Burns began to be affected by the principles which led to the French Revolution, when, of course, as Sir Walter Scott has remarked, the government of the day sunk in his estimation.

#### BENNETT'S WHALING VOYAGE ROUND THE GLOBE.

The ship Tuscan, of 300 tons burden, T. R. Stavers commander, sailed from London in October 1833, on a whaling voyage to the Pacific Ocean, having on board Mr F. D. Bennett, whose object was to investigate the anatomy and habits of southern whales, and the mode of conducting the Sperm Whale Fishery (a subject then untouched by the literature of any country), and to make as many observations on the state of the Polynesian, or other lands he might visit, and to collect as many facts and examples in natural history, as opportunities might offer. The ship had a prosperous voyage round Cape Horn and into the Pacific Ocean, where she made an extensive excursion by the Society and Sandwich Isles, to a point near Nootka Sound; thence southward to the Society Isles again, and from that point straight westward to the Indian archipelago, and so homewards, returning to Britain in November 1836, without having lost one man by disease or accident. Of this voyage we are now presented by Mr Bennett with a very agreeable narrative,\* to which are added distinct sections on the southern whales and whale fishery, and on the general natural history of the countries visited. It is scarcely necessary to remark, that, in the present state of the North Sea whale fishery, a satisfactory account of the southern whales, and of the best modes of taking them, is of great importance in a commercial point of view, to say nothing of its completing a department of natural history over which, till now, much obscurity has rested.

The cachalot, or sperm whale, peculiar to the southern seas, is about sixty feet long, and is chiefly distinguished in external figure from the Greenland whale by the great bulk of its head, upon the fore part of which, external to the skull, is a huge mass of fat, sometimes producing several tons of oil. The animal is gregarious, and usually occurs in small parties, which the sailors call schools, or pods; but sometimes a number, "exceeding all reasonable conception," is assembled, and the sea for miles around appears "a succession of spouts." "A large party of cachalots, gambolling on the surface of the ocean, is one of the most curious and imposing spectacles a whaling voyage affords; the huge size and uncouth agility of the monsters exhibiting a strange combination of the grand and ridiculous. On such occasions it is not unusual to observe a whale of the largest size leap from the water with the activity of a salmon, display the entire of its gigantic frame, suspended at the height of several feet in the air, and again plunge into the sea with a helpless and tremendous fall, which causes the surrounding waters to shoot up in broad and lofty columns capped with foam; whilst others of the school leap, or 'breach,' in a less degree; sportively brandish their broad and fan-shaped flukes in the air, or protrude their heads perpendicularly above the waves like columns of black rock."

The general process of attacking the sperm whale so much resembles that of attacking the Greenland, which has been already described in this work, that we shall not present any summary of it. But there are some features of the adventure, of a peculiar nature, arising from the particular character of the animal, which may be adverted to. While the nature of the Greenland whale is of a pacific and gentle character, the cachalot has a considerable inclination to offensive warfare. If allowed time to rally after being first harpooned, he often becomes a wary and mischievous adversary. An old female and a half-grown male are considered the most troublesome to encoun-

\* Two vols. 8vo. London: Richard Bentley. 1840.



ter, from their active and combative temper. Mr Bennett considers these dangers as sufficient to counterbalance the advantage of the agreeable climate in which the southern whale fishery is pursued. He says—"Some of these whales, when attacked, will retreat but little from the spot on which they are harpooned; but rather lie, and fight with their jaws and tail until life is extinct. Others, without being themselves injured, will aid an attacked companion, and from the circumstance of their actions being less watched, often succeed in doing serious injury to the boats, whilst some few individuals make wilful, deliberate, and even judicious, attempts to crush a boat with their jaws, and, unless avoided or killed, will repeat their efforts until they succeed in their object."

An 'under clip,' or blow received from a whale's flukes near the surface of the water, may shatter and overturn a boat, or injure the crew by the force of the concussion alone; but human life is chiefly endangered when the tail of the animal is swept rapidly through the air, and either descends upon the boat, cutting it down to the water's edge, or encounters in its trajet some of the crew standing up, as the headsmen or harpooners, who are destroyed and carried away by the blow; and this last is the most common, as well as the most sudden and awful calamity recorded in the fishery.

It was by a melancholy accident of this kind that an experienced and enterprising whaler, the father of our commander, lost his life when in command of the ship *Perseverance*, and outward bound on a voyage to the Pacific Ocean. He was engaged in destroying a cachalot on the Brazil Bank, when a rapid and inevitable blow from the flukes of the animal struck him out of the boat; his body floated on the water, and was immediately rescued and conveyed to the ship; but although no external marks of injury were any where visible, all attempts to restore animation were of no avail, for life was totally extinct. One of the crew, pulling an oar in the same boat, was also killed by the same blow. The whale, after thus dealing destruction amongst its pursuers, effected an escape; but there is reason to suppose, from the clue of marked harpoons left in its body, that it was subsequently destroyed by an American whale-ship.

Captain T. Stavers, of the *Tuscan*, when cruising in the North Pacific, during the season of 1831, had the misfortune to lose his chief mate, Mr Young, under circumstances very similar to the preceding. On the morning of the 30th of August, a small party, or 'pod,' of sperm whales was noticed from the ship, and the commander and second-mate lowered their boats in pursuit, leaving Mr Young on board in charge of the vessel. While engaged in destroying a large whale, the boat of the second-mate was so severely shattered that the consort boat was compelled to receive both the wrecked crew and the harpoon-line. The chief mate, on observing this dilemma, lowered his boat and came to their assistance. The harpooned whale was then spouting blood and much exhausted, while a loose cachalot, of equal size, remained in its vicinity, striking at the boats with his flukes, with the evident intention of assisting his wounded comrade. The boats were close together, and Captain Stavers had but just remarked to his mate, that as the whale was nearly dead, he would leave him to complete its destruction, whilst he harpooned the loose cachalot, when the tail of the latter passed, with the rapidity of lightning, over and in front of his boat, and simultaneously, Mr Young, though a large and strong man, was seen flying through the air at a considerable height, and to the distance of nearly forty yards from the boat, ere he fell into the water, where he remained floating motionless on the surface for a few moments, then sank, and was seen no more. There can be no doubt that his death was instantaneous. A native of the Society Islands plunged into the water immediately the accident occurred, and endeavoured to save the body of his unfortunate officer, but it had sunk before he could swim to the spot where it fell. No injury was sustained by any other person in the boat, nor was the boat itself injured, beyond a portion of the bow being broken off, and the thigh-board, which was torn from its place and accompanied the body of the unfortunate mate, so powerful was the impulse it had received. As is customary in cases of serious accident, the line was cut from the whale, that the boats might be at liberty to render every assistance; but when it was found that no human aid could avail in this instance, the boats renewed their attack on the harpooned whale, which was soon after killed and taken to the ship, whilst the mischievous cachalot made off, after he had been pierced with many lance-wounds. The chief mate of the British South-Seaman *Lyra*, when in the cruising ground off Japan in 1832, was also swept from his boat and destroyed by a blow from a whale; and similar casualties are too numerous and uniform in their results to permit a more particular notice.

Some sperm whales appear reluctant to employ their tail when attacked, but prove active and dangerous with their jaws. Such individuals often rather seek than avoid the attacking boats, and, rushing upon them with open mouth, employ every possible art to crush them with their teeth, and, if successful, will sometimes continue in the neighbourhood, biting the wreck and cars into small fragments. When thus threatening a boat, the whale usually turns and swims upon its back, and will sometimes act in a very sluggish and unaccountable manner, keeping its formidable lower jaw suspended for some moments over the

boat in a threatening attitude, but ultimately rolling to one side, and closing its mouth harmlessly; nor is it rare to observe this whale, when pursued and attacked, retain its mouth in an expanded state for some minutes together. Such threatening demonstrations of the jaw, as well as some others with the flukes, occasionally compel a boat's crew to leap into the water, and support themselves by swimming or clinging to cars until the danger is past.

A highly tragical instance of the power and ferocity occasionally displayed by the sperm whale, is recorded in the fate of the American South-Seaman *Essex*, Captain G. Pollard. This vessel, when cruising in the Pacific Ocean, in the year 1820, was wrecked by a whale under the following extraordinary circumstances. The boats had been lowered in pursuit of a school of whales, and the ship was attending them to windward. The master and second-mate were engaged with whales they had harpooned, in the midst of the school, and the chief mate had returned on board to equip a spare boat, in lieu of his own, which had been broken and rendered unserviceable. While the crew were thus occupied, the look-out at the mast-head reported that a large whale was coming rapidly down upon the ship, and the mate hastened his task, in the hope that he might be ready in time to attack it.

The cachalot, which was of the largest size, consequently a male, and probably the guardian of the school, in the meanwhile approached the ship so closely, that although the helm was put up to avoid the contact, he struck her a severe blow, which broke off a portion of her keel. The enraged animal was then observed to retire to some distance, and again rush upon the ship with extreme velocity. His enormous head struck the starboard bow, beating in a corresponding portion of the planks, and the people on board had barely time to take to their boat, before the ship filled with water, and fell over on her side. She did not sink, however, for some hours; and the crew in the boats continued near the wreck until they had obtained a small supply of provisions, when they shaped a course for land; but here, it is to be regretted, they made a fatal error. At the time the accident happened, they were cruising on the equator, in the longitude of about 118 degrees west, with the Marquesan and Society Islands on their lee, and might have sailed in their boats to either of these groups in a comparatively short time. Under an erroneous impression, however, that all those lands were inhabited by an inhospitable race of people, they preferred pulling to windward for the coast of Peru, and in the attempt were exposed for a lengthened period to extreme privations.

The few of the crew who survived their complicated disasters first made the land at Elizabeth, or Henderson's Island, a small and uninhabited spot in the South Pacific, and which until then had never been visited by Europeans. After a short continuance here, part of the survivors again put to sea in search of inhabited land, and ultimately reached the coast of South America; when an English South-Seaman sailed from Valparaiso, and rescued those of the sufferers who had been left to support a precarious existence on Elizabeth Island. By a strange fatality, Captain Pollard, who was amongst the number of survivors, had the misfortune to lose the ship he next commanded, by running her upon a coral reef (then but little known) in the North Pacific. He returned to the United States, dispirited by his ill fortune, and, engaging in agricultural pursuits, ceased to tempt any further the perils of the deep.

A few cachalots have been noted individually as animals dangerous to attack. One was thus distinguished on the cruising ground off the coast of New Zealand, and was long known to whalers by the name of 'New Zealand Tom.' He is said to have been of great size; conspicuously distinguished by a white hump; and famous for the havoc he had made amongst the boats and gear of ships attempting his destruction. A second example, of similar celebrity, was known to whalers in the Straits of Timor. He had so often succeeded in repelling the attacks of his foes as to be considered invincible, but was at length dispatched by a whaler, who, forewarned of his combative temper, adopted the expedient of floating a cask on the sea, to withdraw his attention from the boats; but notwithstanding this ruse, the animal was not destroyed without much hard fighting, nor until the bow of one of the boats had been nipped off by his jaws."

The oil of the sperm whale is the purest of all the animal oils employed in commerce. In its original state, it contains a variable proportion of spermaceti and other gross matters. Of spermaceti we may only remark that, though formerly held as the most certain cure for an inward bruise, its chief use in modern times is as a substitute for wax in the manufacture of candles. The most rare and costly product of the sperm whale is *ambergris*, which is not found in any other of the whale family. Mr Bennett gives us the following account of this substance:—"For many years after the civilised world became acquainted with this drug, its origin and composition remained involved in great obscurity. It was usually found floating on the seas of warm climates, and was generally considered to be of a resinous or bituminous nature: and when subsequently detected in the intestines of the cachalot, a doubt was still entertained of its true character, and whether it had not been swallowed by the animal, rather than produced within its body. Of late years, chemical investigations, and a more extended prose-

cution of the sperm fishery, have satisfactorily solved this problem, and determined that *ambergris* is a morbid concretion in the intestines of the cachalot, deriving its origin either from the stomach or biliary ducts, and allied in its nature to gall-stones, or to the bescars of herbivorous animals; while the masses found floating on the sea, are those that have been voided by the whale, or liberated from the dead animal by the process of putrefaction.

It is not common for the whaler to find *ambergris* in the cachalots he destroys; nor does he, indeed, make a very rigid scrutiny of the intestines in search of it, unless a suspicion of its presence be excited by some marked peculiarity in the whale. Some years ago the whale-ship *Mary*, of London, discovered a dead cachalot floating on the ocean, and as there were no injuries on its body to account for death, that event was attributed to disease; consequently, the whale was strictly searched for *ambergris*, and the captors were gratified by finding a very large quantity of that valuable drug impacted in its bowels.

Concretions of *ambergris* are either black, grey, yellow, or ash-colour mottled with yellow and black. They occur of various sizes, and their maximum weight would appear to be thirty or forty pounds; but it is recorded that a mass of prodigious size, weighing 182 pounds, was carried to Ireland in the year 1694. An entire concretion, which had been recently taken from a cachalot destroyed by the South-Seaman *Hoffly*, and which was shown to me by her commander, when we spoke that vessel in 1835, did not exceed four ounces in weight. It was in the state as removed from the whale; of an oval form, and pointed at each extremity; of a dull-black colour; smooth on the surface; resembled soap in texture and consistence; and was similarly unctuous to the touch. Its odour was slight and peculiar, but not decidedly fragrant, unless heat was applied.

The only use made of *ambergris* in this country is as a perfume, and for this purpose it is chiefly prepared in the form of an alcoholic solution, or essence. It possesses a peculiar property of increasing the power of other perfumes to which it may be added, and when combined with musk, has a remarkable effect in softening the odour of that drug, and rendering it more agreeable. The retail price it bears in London is about one guinea the ounce—a value which invites to its frequent adulteration. The best tests of its purity are the oily appearance it assumes, and the odour it emits, upon the application of heat; and its perfect solubility in hot alcohol.

Some medical virtues have been attributed to this odoriferous substance, but they are all doubtful and unimportant. It is said to be tonic, aphrodisiac, and antispasmodic; it is certainly an aperient."

#### BIOGRAPHIC SKETCHES.

DR DENMAN.

THE amusing work entitled "*Physic and Physicians*," recently published, contains an autobiographical memoir of Dr Denman, extracted from his "*Introduction to the Practice of Midwifery*," and which gives an interesting account of the difficulties he had to meet and overcome before attaining the eminence in his profession to which his talents and high accomplishments entitled him. As this memoir seems worthy of being extensively read, we present it to our readers in the abridged form in which we find it in the new work above mentioned. It must be premised that Denman was born and educated in the country, and came to London in 1754, for further information and improvement. "'The money,' he says, 'with which I was supplied for this purpose, amounted to L.75; L.50 bequeathed by my grandfather, and L.25 as my share of what my father was supposed to be worth at the time of his death.'

As I am now,' he continues, 'entering upon the details of my own life, I may be permitted to speak of myself. I had been educated at the free-school at Bakewell, in such sort of knowledge as my old master Mr Hudson was capable of teaching. I understood a little Greek, I was tolerably well informed in the Latin language, and I wrote a good hand.

I had not been instructed in any of those accomplishments which serve to show inferior capacities to advantage, nor had I seen much company, having never been from home a week at any time of my life.

It might be truly said that I was 'home-bred'; but I had an excellent constitution, having been accustomed to live on the most homely diet, and I had hardly ever been out of bed at ten o'clock at night. In short, I was a meagre, hungry, sharp-set lad. Though my education was very incomplete, I had a very competent knowledge of pharmacy, and knew as much of disease as the frequent reading of Dr Sydenham's works and a few other books could give me. I had a common understanding, and some ambition to succeed in the world, though I was ignorant of the means of procuring success; but I had been trained in habits of industry, frugality, and civility or respect to those with whom I had been connected.



When I arrived in town, I was recommended to Mr Hunt, a hairdresser in Dean Street, with whom my brother had lodged and boarded. I paid him ten shillings and sixpence a-week, and a bad bargain he had. The money I brought with me to London was intended for the purpose of enabling me to attend St George's Hospital, and two courses of anatomical lectures; but in six months it was wholly expended. I knew little of economy, for having never been accustomed to the management or disposal of money, I acted as a child in this respect, contriving how to spend it as soon as it was received. This was rather a misfortune than a fault; but it is amazing to me, when I recollect how many years I lived in the world without changing this disposition, and how many inconveniences it caused me in the course of my life. My money being gone, there was a necessity of seeking some employment for immediate support. Many were thought of, but none seemed so agreeable to myself or friends as going to sea in the king's service. I applied to the Navy Board for an order to be examined at Surgeons' Hall; and, very much to my own astonishment, I passed as surgeon to a ship of sixth rate, April 3, 1755. The ship to which I was appointed lay at Blackstairs, but I had no money to prepare for the voyage, or to bear my expenses to the ship. I pawned my watch, and set off with about forty shillings in my pocket, to enter among strangers upon a way of life of which I had no more idea than of the Mogul's court.

After Dr Denman's return from sea, he was recommended by his friends to settle at Winchester. At this time he had saved up £500. After residing at Winchester for some time, he says in his journal, "I soon became impatient of waiting, and began to blame myself and others for having undertaken a matter of so much importance without more deliberation. I fretted, made myself less likely to succeed by uneasiness and solicitude, and after teasing myself and my friends for about four months, I determined to quit Winchester, having thrown away, since my arrival in England, nearly two hundred pounds."

Dr Denman left Winchester for the great metropolis; and after attending a course of anatomical lectures and dissections, on the recommendation of Drs Kelly and Kirkpatrick he obtained his degree of M.D. from the University of Aberdeen.

Dr Denman received forty pounds in fees the first year; but this sum, he says, "though not adequate to pay my expenses, gave me some encouragement." He then published an essay on puerperal fever, which gained him some credit and increased his practice. He also published a letter to Dr Hirsch, on the construction and use of vapour baths; but this, the author says, "scarcely produced so much as to pay the expense of printing it."

The doctor, finding it difficult to support himself from the proceeds of his practice, applied to be appointed surgeon to one of the king's yachts. He received the appointment, which was worth £70 a-year to him; but in 1777 he was obliged to resign the situation, as the yacht was ordered upon service, and the attendance would have been incompatible with his London business. But to continue the doctor's autobiography:—"The whole savings," he says, "of the nine years I had been at sea, were now entirely expended, and I had with great difficulty kept myself out of debt; the thoughts of which hurting my pride, and giving me very mortifying reflections, I began to be very circumspect about my expenses. However, on the strength of the yacht, I had taken a small house in Oxendon Street, but I furnished only one parlour, thinking to complete it gradually, as I was able; and I hired a maid-servant, who cheated me very much. When I went into this house, excepting my furniture, I had but twenty-four shillings in the world, but I was out of debt. My business increased every year, and in the third year after I had taken my house, I had two hundred and fifty pounds, which, together with the profits for the yacht, prevented all present inconvenience, and gave me better hopes for the future."

About this time died Dr Cooper, a teacher of midwifery, of no great reputation. Mr Osborn, who had attended St George's Hospital when I did, and who was pretty much in the same predicament with respect to fortune as myself, agreed to give lectures with me. We purchased Dr Cooper's apparatus for £120, and great difficulty we had to raise the money between us. We began to read lectures in the year 1770, awkwardly enough, and with little encouragement, as I suppose most people do at first; but it is probable that we improved, for in a short time the lectures flourished, and with them my business, and I believe my credit also.

Dr Cooper had likewise been man-midwife to the Middlesex Hospital; I offered myself as a candidate to succeed him; and after a very hard contest, some expense, and endless trouble, I was elected jointly with Dr Krohn.

I was now surgeon to the William and Mary yacht, I was teacher of midwifery, I was man-midwife to the Middlesex Hospital, I had published two pamphlets, which had at least acquired me a character for industry and common abilities, and I got upwards of £300

a-year by my business. I was in the thirty-seventh year of my age, and I determined to marry; and becoming acquainted with the family of Mr Brodie, a respectable army linen-draper, I chose Elizabeth, his youngest daughter, then in the twenty-fourth year of her age. I received no money as a dowry, but two leasehold houses in Vine Street, Piccadilly, which produced £80 a-year, clear of all deductions.

It was impossible to have chosen a wife more suitable to my disposition and circumstances; her manners were amiable, her disposition gentle, her understanding naturally good, and improved by reading and the conversation of reasonable people, and she had that regard for truth and propriety, that I was firmly persuaded no human consideration could induce her to depart from them. She was frugal without meanness, temperate, and cheerful; and it was impossible for any two people to have lived together with more perfect harmony than we did for nine years.

My assiduity increased with my family, so that in the very year we were married, we saved £200, and have continued to do so every year since. About two years after our marriage, I thought it necessary to take a larger house, partly for appearance and partly for convenience, that in which we lived being too small. In the year 1772, I therefore removed into Queen Street, Golden Square, which I thought would be a good situation for lectures and for business, and I soon after purchased the lease of this house for £1200. Three hundred pounds of this money I had saved, and for the rest I paid interest about four years, when the whole purchase was completed. I had now a large house; my business brought me in about £400 a-year, the lectures £100, the houses in Vine Street £80, the yacht £70, and I lived rent free. My business was chiefly among the lower class of people, but I never lost sight of the possibility of getting business among a higher rank; and I had struggled through so many difficulties, that my mind became seasoned against common accidents, and I was better qualified to conduct myself in the more intricate parts of the business of life. My friends have for some years given me credit for being remarkably steady; but I may assure the reader of this, whether it be my wife, or my daughters, or my son, that if I have steadiness, it is all acquired, my natural disposition being impetuous. I always thought steadiness worth every other quality, either in man or woman, and it has been the business of my life to acquire it.

About this time I took courage, and kept a chariot in the winter; but the advantages which might result from it were rather expected than realised. My business, however, both increased and improved, though slowly; but in the year 1778 it amounted to £600, and the profits of the lectures to £150; and then I built a new chariot. In the year 1777, I purchased two pieces of land near Lynn, in Norfolk, for which I paid down £350, and was to pay £500 more. This land was to bring me in four per cent. for my money, or £24 a-year; but I was unfortunate in my bargain, the value of money increasing immediately after I had made it; first, by the failure of Mr Fordyce the banker, which put almost an instant stop to all credit; and, secondly, by the French and American war, which occasioned a real scarcity of money.

With my new chariot I had a coachman in a handsome livery, and a servant behind, which were beyond my wish and inclination, but I thought them due to my present reputation, as well as to my future prospects; and I hoped that I had secured my family from distress, if I were to die before I had an opportunity of making any further addition to my fortune. We observed the most strict frugality in all other respects. On February 23, 1779, I was made happy by the birth of my son, which was an unexpected blessing, as I had given up all hopes of having any more children, my daughters being at that time more than seven years of age. I shall not fail to do all in my power to provide for them, consistently with those rules of probity and integrity which I have always established as guides of my conduct, and from which, when they are capable of judging, they will be glad that I have never swerved. If the property I may leave behind me should not be so much as they expect, or as I wish, they will see the reason in this narrative. Whatever it may be, it ought to wear well, because it has been honestly gained. They will see an example of the good which attends industry and fair intentions, even when counteracted by errors and indiscretion.

The continuation of this memoir must be left to some future period, and it concludes for the present on the 6th of August 1779.

Thus concludes the deeply interesting autobiography of Dr Denman. It appears that, after having written the above account of his early life, he found that his business did not increase as rapidly as he anticipated, and he was compelled to take pupils, three of whom attained considerable eminence in the profession, namely, Dr Parry, of Bath; Mr Chesson, of Hinckley; and Philip Martineau, Esq., of Norwich.

In 1781, his house was burned down, which involved him in considerable pecuniary difficulties. On the death of Dr Hunter, Denman rose rapidly in practice, and was placed at the head of his profession. Upon removing his residence to Old Burlington Street, he was called to attend the late Duchess of Devonshire—

\* [The keeping of a carriage is indispensable to success in the practice of London physicians. No man who walks on foot is supposed to possess any ability.—Ed.]

a circumstance particularly gratifying to him, as, from the impression of his early life, he always felt strongly attached to that noble family.

Dr Denman now finding the duties of his profession too laborious for him, he gradually introduced his son-in-law, Mr Croft, who had chosen the same branch of the profession, and who attended to the more arduous duties of the practice, until the doctor finally retired from the field. Dr Denman died in the year 1815.

#### CONTRABAND MUSEUM IN PARIS.

I HAD caught a bad cold, and just as I lifted up my head to sneeze, I saw through one of the windows of the mayor's office, in the twelfth *arrondissement*, the body of a negro hanging by the neck. At the first glance, and even at the second, I took it for a human being whom disappointed love, or perhaps an expeditious justice, had disposed of so suddenly; but I soon ascertained that the ebony gentleman in question was only a kind of doll as large as life. What to think of this I did not know; so I asked the doorkeeper the meaning of it.

"This is the contraband museum," was the answer; and, on my showing a curiosity to examine it, he was kind enough to act as my *cicerone*.

In a huge dusty room are scattered over the floor, on the walls, and along the ceiling, all the inventions of roguery which have been confiscated from time to time by those guardians of the law, the revenue officers. It is a complete arsenal of the weapons of smuggling: all unfortunately in complete confusion. Look before you; there is a hoghead dressed up as a nurse, with a child that holds just two quarts and a half. On the other side are logs, hollow as the Trojan horse, and filled with whole armies of cigars. On the floor lies a huge box constrictor, gorged with China silks; and just beyond it a pile of coal, curiously perforated with spoils of cotton. The coloured gentleman who had excited my sympathy so much at first, met with his fate under the following circumstances:—He was built of tin, painted black, and stood like a heyduck or Ethiopian *chasseur*, on the foot-board of a carriage, fastened by the feet and hands. He had frequently passed through the gates, and was well known by sight to the soldiers, who noticed that he was always showing his teeth, which they supposed to be the custom of his country. One day the carriage he belonged to was stopped by a crowd at the gate. There was, as usual, a grand chorus of oaths and yells, the vocal part being performed by the drivers and cartmen, and the instrumental by their whips. The negro, however, never spoke a word. His good behaviour delighted the soldiers, who held him up as an example to the crowd. "Look at the black fellow," they cried; "see how well he behaves! Bravo, nigger, bravo!" He showed a perfect indifference to their applause. "My friend," said a clerk at the barrier, jumping up on the footboard, and slapping our sable friend on the shoulder, "we are really very much obliged to you!" Oh, surprise! the shoulders rattled. The officer was bewildered: he sounded the footman all over, and found he was a man of metal, and as full as his skin would hold of the very best contraband liquor. The juicy mortal was seized at once, and carried off in triumph. The first night the revenue people drank up one of his shoulders, and he was soon bled to death. It is now six years since he lost all the moisture in his system, and was reduced to a dry skeleton.

How many strange stories these inventions of roguery might tell! Only ask that empty mattress that lies there by the stove. That mattress came from Valenciennes. One morning, two citizens left the town, with swords in hand, and seconds by their side. The solemn mournful gait of their companions indicated clearly the deadly character of the promenade, which took place before the eyes of the revenue officers. The angry principals were so anxious to get to work, that they drew almost as soon as they were beyond the walls. The crossing of their blades, and the clatter of the duel, would easily be noticed from the guard-house. After a desperate contest, the noise ceased. A cry of distress was heard; and if both the contending parties had preserved their honour untouched, the person of one of them could not boast of the same immunity. A wide wound across the forehead, and a scientific thrust into the region of the sternum, which bled profusely, were easily seen. In a moment, a hand-barrow, with the aforesaid mattress upon it, were transformed into a litter, and the procession re-entered the town by the same gate, amidst the sympathies of the guards.

It happened that one of the soldiers had dabbled a little in medicine, and been surgeon's mate in a regiment. He took pity on the wounded man, and followed him home, to offer him his services. This generous behaviour won him all hearts in Valenciennes, except those of the seconds, who were at a loss how to get rid of a benefactor whose presence would be so fatal to the success of their daring fraud. At last, the most ingenious of them took the soldier aside, and begged him to wait a few moments in another room, till he got the sick man ready to receive his disinterested physician. The surgeon-soldier readily agreed to this; the friend availed himself of the interval, and whispered in the patient's ear, as he lay on the mattress, "We are lost!"

"*Sabrebleu!* and why?" asked the wounded man.

"Speak lower! one of the custom-house guards wants to dress your wound."

"My wounds? he shant do it—I want to keep them as they are, and you go and tell him so."

"He wont believe it," was the answer.

"But suppose I dont want to be cured? I presume I am my own master, and besides, I have a reason for it."

"I know that, but the fool will insist on it."

"He may go to the d—! I'll jump out of the window first."

"Why, you wretch, we shall be ruined."

"What of it? I wish I had really been badly wounded, I give you my word for it."

"Alas! I'm afraid it's the only way to get out of this scrape."



"Much obliged to you."  
 "If you only would!"  
 "Well, what?"  
 "It's time enough yet, perhaps."  
 "Well?"  
 "The wife of Brutus, on a like occasion, inflicted a desperate wound on herself."  
 "What have I got to do with that?"  
 "Don't you understand, my dear friend?"  
 "Ah, horrible! I shudder at the thought. You are so fond of me, that you are very willing to shed my blood!"—and the frightened patient raised himself up in bed.  
 "Come, come, try to be reasonable."  
 "You are troublesome: do you think I'm going to throw away my life to serve you—think of something else. I should like very much to oblige you—but in such a way—never! I'd die first."  
 "Only think what it is you object to—only two little wounds—if they only look natural, it's all sufficient. Come, my dear fellow, say you agree to it."  
 "I tell you again and again, I won't."  
 "Come, now, be clever, I've an easy hand, and the surgeon will be tired waiting."  
 "I suppose you think it will be fine fun for me."  
 "Oh what a fuss you make about a couple of little scratches! If kindness and friendship cannot touch your obstinate heart, let's see what force will do." And thereupon the friend seized his sword; the patient dodged the first blow, leaped to his feet, snatched up the other weapon, and attacked his aggressor furiously. The soldier, hearing the scuffle, rushed into the room, and succeeded, not without trouble, in separating the combatants, when he found, to his great surprise, that it was not the sham patient that needed help, but his friend, till now safe and sound, whom the dying man had pinked just below the thorax.  
 "I thought," said the soldier, "that these gentlemen were too polite to give me all the trouble of coming for nothing."  
 The wounded man was soon cured, and the maitress, stuffed full of English goods, well repaid the soldier for his medical services.—*From the French, in the New York Mirror.*

## ALCOHOL.

ALCOHOL was so denominated, by an Arabian physician who discovered it, from a fine impalpable powder with which the ladies of Barbary were accustomed to tinge the hair and edges of the eyelids—the word being thus anatomised: *Al*, the, and *Kahol*, powder of lead ore.

There is a prevalent notion, which has been of some use in resistance to the maxims of temperance, that, alcohol being a direct product of nature, it ought to be esteemed as a gift of Providence, and received and enjoyed as such. We find this view controverted in a work recently published under the title of "Bacchus, being an Essay on the Nature, Causes, Effects, and Cure of Intemperance," by Mr Grindrod of Manchester. It is there represented that alcohol is a thing of considerably different character, and that of course all such arguments for its use as an intoxicating fluid must fall to the ground.

When vegetables cease to live, they, like animals under the same circumstances, hasten to a complete dissolution or decomposition, so as to become once more inorganic matter. Very soon after they have ceased to live, if steeped in water, at a temperature of about 60 degrees of Fahrenheit, they begin to undergo a process called *fermentation*. Of this process there are three stages, each, however, only to be realised under certain conditions. For the first, or *vinous* stage, the above temperature is necessary; for the second, the *acetous* stage, a temperature of 70 degrees is required; the third, or *putrefactive* stage, has also conditions peculiar to itself.

The first stage in fermentation is named the *vinous*, because at that stage is developed the spirit of wine, or alcohol. The second is named *acetous*, because in like manner vinegar is then produced. It is by arresting the process at these respective stages, and subjecting the fermenting matter to distillation, that human ingenuity obtains alcohol and vinegar, neither of which is ever found, in any form or combination whatever, as the effect of any living process, but only as arising "out of the decay, the dissolution, and the wreck, of organised matter." The constituent elements of alcohol are, nevertheless, the same as those of all living vegetable substances, namely, *carbon*, *hydrogen*, and *oxygen*; the first being, out of 100 parts, as 52, the second as 13, and the third as 35. These statements will serve to introduce the following remarks of Mr Grindrod:—

"On the supposition that the formation of alcohol is the result of natural laws, it may pertinently be inquired, why man interferes with and disturbs the operations of nature, at a particular period, that is, exactly at the commencement of her object, and thus prevents that ultimate action which otherwise would inevitably take place. The answer is simple and decisive. He arrests the operations of nature exactly at that period when he can supply himself with a product calculated to gratify his depraved and vitiated appetites. Hence the multifarious and complicated inventions of the wine-maker and brewer.

This branch of our inquiry may be better understood by a slight review of the active laws of animate vegetable creation, so far at least as they have connexion with the present object of our investigation. The constituent principles of vegetables consist of carbon, oxygen, and hydrogen. The poisonous *opium*, and the nutritious *grape*; the fragrant *rose*, and the nauseous *asafoetida*; the refreshing *foliage*, and the delicate

tints of the vast *arcanum* of vegetable nature, each owes its peculiar quality to these simple substances. So wonderful, indeed, is the laboratory of nature, that even from the same trunk, and from a mass of sap, apparently homogeneous in its character, substances of a very opposite nature are produced. An oil, bland as that of the olive, is eliminated from the poppy. In some parts of the globe it is extensively employed for dietetic purposes. From the same plant is extracted the milky juice, from whose substance is produced the poisonous *opium*. The delicious pulp of the peach also is well known to enclose in its kernel a poison of a most deadly character. Olive oil is another instance in point. Its chemical constituents approach near to those of alcohol; how materially, however, do these substances differ in their operation on the human system! These facts are sufficient to convince us how profound, and yet how simple, are the operations of creation, and how boundless she is in her resources to supply the wants and to gratify the lawful pleasures of man.

The knowledge that the whole of this variety in vegetable creation is occasioned simply by a very slight variation in the combination of three simple substances, affords to us a distinct idea how the elementary principles of alcohol may exist in nature, without the actual existence of alcohol itself. No human investigation has as yet, nor indeed have we any reason to suppose it ever will, discover the slightest trace of native alcohol in any part of the creation of nature.

The application of this argument is familiar and clear. Many persons assert that alcohol is contained in grain and fruit, and in every part of vegetable creation, and that therefore it is intended by the Creator for the use of man. Such, however, is not the case. The elements of alcohol, indeed, are to be found throughout the whole of vegetable creation, and so are the elements of other deleterious substances, but not a particle of alcohol itself. So long as the chemistry of life retains its way, will the constituent materials of vegetable matter hold together in the relation in which nature has placed them. Death, however, or, in other words, decomposition, subverts this natural arrangement, dissolves its connexions, and new and totally different combinations are thereby formed. So it is with alcohol. In wines, this poison undergoes evolution during the decay or decomposition of the juice of the grape; in malt liquors, man destroys the vital principle of the barley, by converting it into malt, and then subjects it to another artificial process, which produces results similar to those which take place in the production of wine.

By many it has been supposed that alcohol does not exist ready formed in fermented liquors, but that it is generated by the heat used in the process of distillation. The fallacy, however, of this view, is manifest from several considerations, and by none more than by the following decisive experiment made by Mr Brande, and subsequently confirmed by other distinguished philosophers. Add to wine a solution of the subacetate of lead, and the colouring and extractive matter will be precipitated. The further addition of a small portion of dry subcarbonate of potassa, separates the alcohol from the fluid, which floats on the surface, and will ignite on coming in contact with a lighted taper. By this means we decisively determine that distillation separates merely the alcohol, which had been previously evolved by the process of fermentation; its constituent parts being thereby extracted, in their elementary forms, from the saccharine juices of the grain or fruit, and combined under a new, a potent, and a deleterious form.

Arguments like these are interesting, and even necessary to remove such objections as are urged in proof that alcohol is a "good creature of God." The great point, however, to be ascertained, is, the effect of these liquors on the moral and physical powers of man. Let it be admitted, for the sake of argument, that alcohol is a creature of God, and no advantage will be derived by its advocates from the concession. Many of our most powerful poisons are the creatures of God. The poisonous *opium*, and the deadly *hemlock*, are each of them creatures of God; yet the Creator nowhere authorises his creatures to make use of them as habitual articles of diet. He has given to man the power of distinguishing between moral good and evil; and although the scientific knowledge of the precise character and quality of articles generally used for dietetic purposes may be limited in a great measure to professional men, yet it is every man's duty, as it is obviously his interest, to acquire by experience all the knowledge he can upon that important subject; and conscientiously to abstain from every indulgence which is calculated either to affect his moral character, or to injure the exquisite texture of his intellectual or corporeal frame.

We leave this train of reasoning to the best consideration of our readers, without pretending to pronounce decisively on a point which involves the whole question of providential design.

## SURPRISING OF MILITARY POSTS.

About the same time, one of Hill's posts near the confluence of the Aron with the Adour, was surprised by some French companies, who remained in advance until fresh troops detached from Urt forced them to repossess the river again. This affair was a retaliation for the surprise of a French post a few days before, by the sixth division, which was attended with some circumstances repugnant to the friendly habits long established between the French

and British troops at the outposts. The value of such a generous intercourse old soldiers well understand, and some illustrations of it at this period may be quoted. On the 9th of December, the 43d were assembled in column on an open space, within twenty yards of the enemy's out-post; yet the latter continued to walk his beat for an hour without concert, relying so confidently on the customary system, that he placed his knapsack on the ground to ease his shoulders. When at last the order to advance was given, one of the British soldiers, stepping out, told him to go away, and helped him to replace his pack; the firing then commenced. The next morning the French, in like manner, warned a 43d sentry to retire. But the most remarkable instance happened on the occasion of Lord Wellington being desirous of getting to the top of a hill occupied by the enemy near Bayonne. He ordered the riflemen who escorted him to drive the French away, and seeing the former stealing up, as he thought, too near, called out to commence firing; with a loud voice one of those old soldiers replied, "No firing!" and then, holding up the butt of his rifle towards the French, tapped it in a peculiar way. At the well-understood signal, which meant, "We must have the hill for a short time," the French, who, though they could not maintain, would not have relinquished the post without a fight if they had been fired upon, quietly retired. And this signal would never have been made if the post had been one capable of a permanent defence, so well do veterans understand war and its proprieties.—*Napier's Peninsular War.*

## ANECDOTE OF ACHILLE MURAT.

[The following curious anecdote is translated in the New York Mirror, from the *Courrier des Etats-Unis*, a French periodical which has been published for several years in the same city, and is now under the care of a gentleman named Gallardet.]

We may mention the name of a prince as having been, for a time at least, connected with the New Orleans bar. M. Achille Murat, son of the ex-king of Naples, made his *début* as an advocate there, and showed himself a remarkable man, if not an orator. With a singularity, however, which belongs to his character, he never appeared at the bar a second time, and has since quitted the gown and the country. We may, however, mention an anecdote of his stay here, which rests on the authority of his mother, the Princess of Lipona.

While Italy was a province of the empire, a mutiny broke out in the garrison of Leghorn, of so serious a character as to excite in a high degree Napoleon's indignation. He was no friend of insubordination, and resolved to crush it in its bud, and make a terrible example of the culprits. Joachim Murat was charged with this painful duty, and set off for Leghorn without delay. When he arrived there, the insurrection had spent itself, and shame and remorse succeeded a temporary forgetfulness. However, the emperor's orders were strict, and punishment must be inflicted. Murat therefore called the soldiers together, and, after reproaching them bitterly for their offence, required that the ringleaders of the mutiny should be given up, otherwise ten men out of every battalion would be drawn by lot, and shot. The soldiers hung their heads, and professed themselves ready to submit to any punishment their emperor might inflict upon them, but begged the general not to force them to turn informers against their comrades. Murat would not yield, and the ten men, whose names were drawn, were about to be carried off, when three soldiers stepped to the front, and avowed themselves the instigators of the revolt. There was so much shame and contrition expressed by the *vieux moustaches*, that Murat was deeply moved. He stood silent a while, then ordered the three criminals to be taken to prison, to be shot the next morning. That same night, when every thing was quiet, except the measured step of the patrol, and the cry of the sentinels on the walls, Murat was seated in his apartment, while before him stood three grizzled veterans, cap in hand, weeping like children. It was not death that the heroes of Arcole and Marengo feared—it was to be disgraced to die the death of traitors; they wept, not for their fate, but for their crime!

"Listen!" said Murat. "I believe you are really sorry for what you have done, and I want to save your lives. To-morrow, at daybreak, you will be led out to execution, outside the city. I will take care there shall be no spectators. The platoon will fire on you with blank cartridges, and you must fall down, and remain motionless, till they march off the ground. A trusty man will be ready to put you into a close carriage; a vessel sails to-morrow for America, on board of which you will embark. Here is a purse of gold for each of you. Will you promise to behave yourselves?"

Every thing happened as he had arranged it; and Napoleon thanked Murat for having taken the lives of only three of his soldiers. The circumstances remained a secret till 1830, when Prince Achille Murat, walking one day in the suburbs of New Orleans, was caught in a shower. He sought shelter in the nearest house, a small and plain one; a man and wife, with their children, were the only inhabitants. The man had an austere, yet good-natured face, and that stiffish walk which an old soldier can never get rid of. The prince remarked that his host eyed him fixedly, and seemed strangely agitated. The prince, on the other hand, sitting by the humble hearth, cast his eyes round the room with the idle curiosity of a man who has nothing to do. He rose, for he saw on the walls some coarse engravings of Napoleon's generals and battles. Above them were placed, under a laurel crown, two portraits of Murat, as general, and as king. "Have you ever served France?" asked the prince. "Yes, sir," answered his host, not without embarrassment. "Where? and under whom?" "In Italy, under General Murat." The son of the soldier-king held out his hand to his father's old comrade. "Your name, my brave fellow?" "Claude Girard; might I ask, sir,—" "I am Achille Murat." "It is true, then, and my eyes did not deceive me! You are the son of my general, of my king, of my saviour! If I am now alive, if I have a wife and children, I owe it to him, and to

him alone;" and thereupon the old soldier told the story we have sketched down, often interrupting it with blessings and exclamations of gratitude.

The prince, whose singular character, and aversion to society, led him to avoid the city, and wander about in the country, never, while he remained in America, found any roof more welcome, and visited none oftener, than that which covered the poor and humble abode of his father's old companion in arms.

#### HUMOURS OF AN IRISH STUDENT.

AMONG the many peculiar tastes which distinguished Mr Francis Webber, was an extraordinary fancy for street begging; he had, over and over, won large sums upon his successes in that difficult walk; and so perfect were his disguises, both of dress, voice, and manner, that he actually, at one time, succeeded in obtaining charity from his very opponent in the wager. He wrote ballads with the greatest facility, and sung them with infinite pathos and humour; and the old woman at the corner of College Green was certain of an audience, when the severity of the night would leave all other minstrelsy deserted. As these feats of *jonglerie* usually terminated in a row, it was a most amusing part of the transaction to see the singer's part taken by the mob against the college men, who, growing impatient to carry him off to supper somewhere, would invariably be obliged to have a fight for the booty.

Now, it chanced that a few evenings before, Mr Webber was returning with a pocket well lined with copper, from a musical *réunion* he had held at the corner of York Street, when the idea struck him to stop at the end of Grafton Street, where a huge stone grating at that time exhibited, perhaps it exhibits still, the descent to one of the great main sewers of the city.

The light was shining brightly from a pastry-cook's shop, and showed the large bars of stone, between which the muddy water was rushing rapidly down, and splashing in the torrent that ran boisterously several feet beneath.

To stop in the street of any crowded city is, under any circumstances, an invitation to others to do likewise, which is rarely unaccepted; but, when in addition to this, you stand fixedly in one spot, and regard with stern intensity any object near you, the chances are ten to one that you have several companions in your curiosity before a minute expires.

Now, Webber, who had at first stood still, without any particular thought in view, no sooner perceived that he was joined by others, than the idea of making something out of it immediately occurred to him.

"What is it, ag?" inquired an old woman, very much in his own style of dress, pulling at the hood of his cloak.

"And can't you see for yourself, darlin'?" replied he sharply, as he knelt down, and looked most intensely at the sewer.

"Are ye long there, avick?" inquired he of an imaginary individual below; and then waiting as if for a reply, said, "Two hours!" "Blessed Virgin! he's two hours in the drain!"

By this time the crowd had reached entirely across the street, and the crushing and squeezing, to get near the important spot, was awful.

"Where did he come from?" "Who is he?" "How did he get there?" were the questions on every side, and various surmises were afloat, till Webber, rising from his knees, said, in a mysterious whisper to those nearest him, "He's made his escape to-night out o' Newgate by the big drain, and lost his way; he was looking for the Liffey, and took the wrong turn."

To an Irish mob, what appeal could equal this? A culprit, at any time, has his claim upon their sympathy; but let him be caught in the very act of cheating the authorities, and evading the law, and his popularity knows no bounds. Webber knew this well; and, as the mob thickened around him, sustained an imaginary conversation that Savage Landor might have envied, imparting now and then such hints concerning the runaway, as raised their interest to the highest pitch, and fifty different versions were related on all sides—of the crime he was guilty—the sentence passed on him—and the day he was to suffer.

"Do ye see the light, dear," said Webber, as some ingeniously benevolent individual had lowered down a candle with a string; "do ye see the light; oh! he's fainted, the creature." A cry of horror from the crowd burst forth at these words, followed by an universal shout of "Break open the street."

Pick-axes, shovels, spades, and crow-bars, seemed absolutely the walking accompaniments of the crowd, so suddenly did they appear upon the field of action, and the work of exhumation was begun with a vigour that speedily covered nearly half of the street with mud and paving stones; parties relieved each other at the task, and, ere half an hour, a hole capable of containing a mail-coach, was yawning in one of the most frequented thoroughfares of Dublin. Meanwhile, as no appearance of the culprit could be had, dreadful conjectures as to his fate began to gain ground. By this time the authorities had received intimation of what was going forward, and attempted to disperse the crowd; but Webber, who still continued to conduct the prosecution, called on them to resist the police, and save the poor creature.

And now began a most terrific fray; the stones forming a ready weapon, were hurled at the unprepared constables, who, on their side, fought manfully, but against superior numbers; so that, at last, it was only by the aid of a military force the mob could be dispersed, and a riot, which had assumed a very serious character, got under. Meanwhile, Webber had reached his chambers, and changed his costume, and was relating over a supper table the narrative of his philanthropy to a very admiring circle of his friends.—*Charles O'Malley, the Irish Dragoon.*

#### GREAT EVENTS FROM TRIFLING CAUSES.

There is a tradition in Scotland, that a dram of brandy produced the restoration of Charles II. A messenger from the Parliament of England had brought letters to General Monk whilst he remained in Edinburgh. This

messenger was also intrusted with dispatches to the governor of Edinburgh Castle, a circumstance which he mentioned to one of Monk's servants while on his journey. The man (a sergeant) saw something unusual in this, and prevailed upon his fellow-traveller to drink a dram of brandy with him at a neighbouring ale-house, where the messenger became ultimately so drunk that the sergeant was enabled to take the papers from his custody without detection. This done, he posted to his general with the packet, who, on perusing its contents, found an order for his arrest and detention in the castle. Policy and resentment at once directed the eyes of Monk to Charles Stuart, and his restoration succeeded.

#### THE EGGS AND THE HORSES.

[The following version of a popular English story, of which an outline is given in *Gross's Dictionary*, was one of the "speeches" at St Saviour's Grammar School in November 1837. The youthful author has already given to the world an attractive volume of versified fables, under the title of "Old Friends in a New Dress."—*2*]

John Dobbins was so captivated  
By Mary Trueman's fortune, face, and cap,  
(With near two thousand pounds the hook was baited)  
That in he popped to matrimony's trap.  
One small ingredient towards happiness,  
It seems, he'd occupied a single thought;  
For his accomplice's bride  
Appearing well supplied  
With the three charms of riches, beauty, dress,  
He did not, as he ought,  
Think of ought else; so no inquiry made he  
As to the temper of the lady.  
And here was certainly a great omission;  
None should accept of Hymen's gentle fetter,  
"For worse or better."  
Whatever be their prospect or condition,  
Without acquaintance with each other's nature;  
For many a mild and quiet creature  
Of charming disposition,  
Alas! by thoughtless marriage has destroy'd it.  
So, take advice; let girls dress e'er so tastefully,  
Don't enter into wedlock hastily  
Unless you can't avoid it.

Week follow'd week, and, it must be confessed,  
The bridegroom and the bride had both been blest:  
Month after month had languidly transpired,  
Both parties became tired:  
Year after year dragg'd on;  
Their happiness was gone.

Ah! foolish pair!  
"Bear and forbear"  
Should be the rule for married folks to take.  
But blind mankind (poor discontented elves!)  
Too often make  
The misery of themselves.  
At length the husband said, "This will not do!  
Mary, I never will be ruled by you;  
So, wife, d'ye see?  
To live together as we can't agree,  
Suppose we part!"  
With woman's pride,  
Mary replied  
With all my heart!"

John Dobbins then to Mary's father goes,  
And gives the list of his imagined woes.  
"Dear son-in-law!" the father said, "I see  
All is quite true that you've been telling me;  
Yet there in marriage is such strange fatality,  
That when as much of life  
You will have seen  
As I have been  
My lot to see—I think you'll own your wife  
As good or better than the generality.  
An interest in your case I really take,  
And therefore gladly this agreement make:  
An hundred eggs within this basket lie,  
With which your luck, to-morrow, you shall try;  
Also my five best horses, with my cart;  
And from the farm at dawn you shall depart.  
All round the country go,  
And be particular, I beg;  
Where husbands rule—a horse bestow,  
But where the wives—an egg.  
And if the horses go before the eggs,  
I'll ease you of your wife—I will—I fegs!"

Away the married man departed,  
Briak and light-hearted:  
Not doubting that, of course,  
The first five houses each would take a horse.  
At the first house he knock'd,  
He felt a little shock'd,  
To hear a female voice, with angry roar,  
Scream out—"Huz!"  
Who's there below?  
Why, husband, are you deaf? go to the door,  
See who it is, I beg.  
Our poor friend John  
Trudged quickly on,  
But first laid at the door an egg.  
I will not, all his journey through,  
The discontented traveller pursue;  
Suffice it here to say  
That when his first day's task was nearly done,  
He'd seen an hundred husbands, minus one,  
And eggs just ninety-nine had given away.  
"Ha! there's a house where he I seek must dwell,"  
At length cried John; "I'll go and ring the bell."

The servant came—John ask'd him, "Pray,  
Friend, is your master in the way?"  
"No," said the man, with smiling phiz,  
"My master is not, but my mistress is;  
Walk in that parlour, sir, my lady's in it;  
Master will be himself there—in a minute."  
The lady said her husband then was dressing,  
And, if his business was not very pressing,  
She would prefer that he should wait until  
His toilet was completed;  
Adding, "Pray, sir, be seated."  
"Madam, I will,"  
Said John, with great politeness; "but I own  
That you alone  
Can tell me all I wish to know;  
Will you do so?  
Pardon my rudeness,  
And just have the goodness

\* London: Smith, Elder, and Co. 1837.

(A wager to decide) to tell me—do—  
Who governs in this house—your spouse, or you?"  
"Sir," said the lady, with a doubting nod,  
"Your question's very odd:  
But as, I think, none ought to be  
Ashamed to see their duty (do you see?)  
On that account I scruple not to say  
It always is my pleasure to obey.  
But here's my husband (always sad without me);  
Take not my word, but ask him, if you doubt me."  
"Sir," said the husband, "'tis most true;  
I promise you,  
A more obedient, kind, and gentle woman  
Does not exist."  
"Give us your fist,"  
Said John, "and, as the case is something more than common,  
Allow me to present you with a beast  
Worth fifty guineas at the very least.  
There's Smiler, sir, a beauty, you must own,  
There's Prince, that handsome black,  
Ball the grey mare, and Saladin the roan,  
Besides old Dunn;  
Come, sir, choose one;  
But take advice from me,  
Let Prince be he;  
Why, sir, you'll look the hero on his back."  
"I'll take the black, and thank you too."  
"Nay, husband, that will never do;  
You know, you've often heard me say  
How much I long to have a grey;  
And this one will exactly do for me."  
"No, no," said he,  
"Friend, take the four others back,  
And only leave the black."  
"Nay, husband, I declare  
I must have the grey mare."  
Adding (with gentle force)  
"The grey mare is, I'm sure, the better horse."  
"Well, if it must be so—good sir,  
The grey mare we prefer;  
So we accept your gift." John made a leg;  
"Allow me to present you with an egg;  
'Tis my last egg remaining  
The cause of my regaining,  
I trust, the fond affection of my wife,  
Whom I will love the better all my life.  
Home to content has her kind father brought me;  
I thank him for the lesson he has taught me."

R. S. S.

#### LORD ERSKINE'S LOVE OF ANIMALS.

"I dined to-day [a day in January 1808] at Lord Erskine's. It was what might be called a great opposition dinner. \* \* Among the light and trifling topics of conversation after dinner, it may be worth while to mention one, as it strongly characterises Lord Erskine. He has always expressed and felt a great sympathy for animals. He has talked for years of a bill he was to bring into parliament, to prevent cruelty towards them. He has always had several favourite animals to which he has been much attached, and of which all his acquaintance have a number of anecdotes to relate—a favourite dog, which he used to bring when he was at the bar, to all his consultations; another favourite dog, which, at the time when he was Lord Chancellor, he himself rescued in the street from some boys who were about to kill it, under pretence of its being mad; a favourite goose, which followed him wherever he walked about his grounds; a favourite macaw, and other dumb favourites without number. He told us now that he had got two favourite leeches. He had been bloodied by them last autumn, when he had been taken dangerously ill at Portsmouth; they had saved his life, and he had brought them with him to town; had ever since kept them in a glass; had himself every day given them fresh water; and had formed a friendship with them. He said he was sure they both knew him, and were grateful to him. He had given them different names, Home and Cline (the names of two celebrated surgeons), their dispositions being quite different. After a good deal of conversation about them, he went himself, brought them out of his library, and placed them in their glass upon the table. It is impossible, however, without the vivacity, the tones, the details, and the gestures of Lord Erskine, to give an adequate idea of this singular scene."—*Sir Sam. vel Romilly's Memoirs.*

#### OLIVER CROMWELL.

His speech on dissolving parliament, April 20, 1653, is a burst of extraordinary eloquence:—"It is high time for me to put an end to your sitting in this place, which you have dishonoured by your contempt of all virtue, and defiled by your practice of every vice. You are a factious crew, and enemies to all good government. Ye are a pack of mercenary wretches, and would, like Esau, sell your country for a mess of pottage, and, like Judas, betray your God for a few pieces of money. Is there a single virtue now remaining amongst you? Is there one vice that you do not possess? You have no more religion than my horse: gold is your god. Which of you has not bartered away your conscience for bribes? Is there a man amongst you that has the least care for the good of the Commonwealth? Ye sordid profligates! have ye not defiled this sacred place, and turned the Lord's temple into a den of thieves, by your immoral principles and wicked practices? You, who were deputed here by the people to get grievances redressed, are yourselves become the greatest grievance. Your country, therefore, calls upon me to cleanse this Augean stable, by putting a final period to your iniquitous proceedings in this house: and which, by God's help and the strength he has given, I am now come to do. I command you, therefore, upon the peril of your lives, to depart immediately out of this place. Go! get ye out; make haste. Ye venal slaves, begone! So! take away that shining banble (the mace) there, and lock up the doors."

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